

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 14929

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IT

SUBJ: ALLEGATION OF SPLIT IN CIA OVER POLICY TOWARD PCI

USDOCOUTH FOR INTAF

SHAPEUSNR FOR POLAD

REF: A. ROME 13199

B. ROME 13361

1. THE LEFTIST NEWSPAPER LA REPUBBLICA HAS RESURRECTED THE ISSUE OF THE ALLEGED REPORT OF THE ROME CIA STATION WHICH, AS REPORTED REFTELS, DEFINES PARTICIPATION OF THE PCI IN THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT AS "DESIRABLE." THE PRE-SENT STORY DESCRIBES THE "BACKGROUND" OF THE DOCUMENT AND SEES IN ITS ALLEGED HANDLING IN WASHINGTON EVIDENCE OF A SPLIT BETWEEN OPPOSING FACTIONS WITHIN THE CIA.

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2. THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE CHARACTERIZES THE DOCUMENT, WRITTEN AT THE END OF 1975, AS THE PRODUCT OF THE DESIRE OF THE NEW ROME STATION CHIEF, HUGH MONTGOMERY, TO TAKE A NEW LOOK AT THE ITALIAN SITUATION. THE AUTHOR OF THE REPORT, IDENTIFIED AS "R.B.," WAS THEREFORE GIVEN LICENSE TO GO BEYOND THE CIA'S PREVIOUSLY "VERY RESTRICTED" ROMAN SOURCES AND TO CONSULT FOR THE FIRST TIME THOSE "DIRECTLY INTERESTED"-- THE LEADERS OF THE PCI. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, THE RESULTING REPORT, IN 45 PAGES OF NARRATIVE AND FIVE PAGES OF CONCLUSIONS, DEFINED PCI COLLABORATION IN THE GOVERNMENT AS "DESIRABLE" GIVEN THE PREDICTED ELECTORAL RESULTS AND THE PROVEN INCAPACITY OF THE DC TO CONFRONT ITALY'S MAJOR ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS.

3. LA REPUBBLICA GOES ON TO RELATE THAT WHEN THE REPORT ARRIVED IN CIA HEADQUARTERS IT WAS SENT TO THE AGENCY'S TOP ECHELON FOR INFORMATION, BUT WAS GIVEN NO FURTHER DISTRIBUTION. ONLY AT AN UNSPECIFIED LATER TIME WAS THE DOCUMENT GIVEN WIDER DISTRIBUTION TO HIGH CIA AND STATE OFFICIALS. IT WAS AT THAT TIME THAT A COPY OF THE DOCUMENT CAME INTO THE POSSESSION OF REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL HARRINGTON AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY APPENDED TO HIS RESOLUTION OF INQUIRY.

4. THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DOCUMENT'S DISTRIBUTION REPRESENT, IN THE NEWSPAPER'S VIEW, EVIDENCE OF A SPLIT WITHIN THE CIA, BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND IN ROME, ON THE "PROBLEM OF THE PCI." ORGANIZATIONALLY, THE CIA IS DIVIDED INTO TWO LARGE SECTIONS -- ONE FOR RESEARCH AND THE OTHER FOR OPERATIONS. THESE SECTIONS SOMETIMES, AS IN THE CASE OF VIETNAM, OPERATE AT CROSS PURPOSES. UNDER THESE PREMISES, THE DOCUMENT UNDER DISCUSSION, ALTHOUGH ONLY A REPORT OF THE "RESEARCH" SECTION OF THE CIA, TOOK ON POLITICAL WEIGHT WHEN THE DECISION WAS MADE TO CIRCULATE THE REPORT TO KEY WASHINGTON OFFICIALS.

5. WITH LITTLE REGARD TO CHRONOLOGICAL CONSISTENCY, THE LA REPUBBLICA ARTICLE CLOSES BY COMPARING THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ATTITUDES ALLEGEDLY EXPRESSED IN THE "R.B." REPORT WITH THE MUCH HARSHER ONES EXPRESSED IN THREE OTHER INSTANCES -- IN ANOTHER REPORT OF THE CIA WRITTEN IN 1947, ANOTHER DOCUMENT OF THE SAME YEAR ATTRIBUTED TO HENRY TASCA AND IN THE ALLEGED FINANCING OF NEO-FASCIST GROUPS BY FORMER AMBASSADOR GRAHAM MARTIN.

6. COMMENT: THE STORY REPORTED ABOVE APPEARS TO BE

PART OF A GROWING CAMPAIGN IN THE LEFT PRESS TO PERSUADE THE ITALIAN READING PUBLIC THAT A CHANGE IN THE US POLICY IS IMMINENT. THIS KIND OF PROPAGANDA HAS A DIRECT AND DELETERIOUS EFFECT ON THE DC'S EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN ITSELF INTERNALLY AND TO OBTAIN THE COOPERATION OF THE LAY PARTIES, ESPECIALLY OF THE PSI. WE WOULD HOPE THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL TAKE WHATEVER PREVENTIVE ACTION IS POSSIBLE TO AVOID HAVING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH BEING THE SOURCE FOR FURTHER AMMUNITION TO FEED THIS KIND OF PRESS CAMPAIGN. IF THE ALLEGED "R.B." REPORT DOES IN FACT EXIST, AS WE SUSPECT, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER A CLEAR AND UNEQUIVOCAL DENIAL THAT IT REFLECTS ANYTHING MORE THAN THE PERSONAL OPINION OF ITS AUTHOR.BEAUDRY

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